

OWEN. (*Looking at David.*) Don't you laugh. Someday I might be. (*To Betty.*) What would you think of that?

BETTY. You want some ice fer that?

OWEN. No'm. I like it hot.

BETTY. All right. (*Exits into kitchen. Thunder and lightning. Owen shivers.*)

OWEN. I ain't goin' out thar while it's like this. You couldn't *get* me to go. They's things out thar, nights like this, an' that's true. The lightnin' brings 'em out. They'uz a man melted out thar in them hills oncet. They found him right after one, o' these storms, too. Nobody knowed what happened, but he wuz jest melted down like talla'—'cep' fer 'is teeth, 'n' his bones, 'n' the zipper on his britches. Now, that's true. They's things out thar.

DAVID. Did you want to talk to me, Owen?

OWEN. In private, I do.

CATHERINE. Well. (*With a wry look at David.*) I'll tear myself away.

DAVID. I'll be up to say goodnight.

CATHERINE. Don't be too long.

DAVID. Don't worry.

CATHERINE. And could you bring me a candle?

DAVID. A candle?

CATHERINE. Yeah, another candle. Mine's about shot.

DAVID. I'll get you one. Sure.

CATHERINE. 'Night.

OWEN. 'Night.

DAVID. G'night, honey. (*She is out.*)

OWEN. She go through a lot o' candles, does she? (*David looks at him. Betty re-enters with Charlie's tea.*) Whatcha got thar?

BETTY. Tea. You want some?

OWEN. No'm. (*To David.*) Is they someplace we can talk?

BETTY. You gonna talk, you'll do it right here. No visitors upstairs, that's the rules. (*Gives Charlie his tea.*) An' don't you go drivin' Charlie off, neither.

DAVID. We won't bother him. (*Owen looks at Charlie.*)

BETTY. Goodnight, then. Lock up, will ye, David?

DAVID. I will. Thanks.

BETTY. Don't believe ever'thing ye hear.

DAVID. Don't worry, Betty.

BETTY. 'Night, Owen.

OWEN. *(Still watching Charlie.)* 'Night.

BETTY. *'Night, Charlie! (She leaves. Owen is still scrutinizing Charlie, who watches him back coolly.)*

DAVID. *(Looking at Charlie, smiling.)* Go ahead, don't worry about Charlie.

OWEN. What is he? Deef?

DAVID. No, he's not deaf. He doesn't speak English.

OWEN. He— ?

DAVID. That's right.

OWEN. What's he doin' *here*?

DAVID. I don't know, Owen. A friend of Betty's brought him over.

OWEN. He don't understand me, huh?

DAVID. No.

OWEN. Nary a word?

DAVID. Nope.

OWEN. Well. . . . *(Looking at Charlie and smiling.)* 'Zat right? A foreigner, huh? Huh, Charlie? *(Shakes his head, with a warm chuckle.)* Well—we don't get s' many o' your kind in these parts. *Rubs his chin.)* Why—last time I saw a foreigner, he was wrigglin' on the end o' my bayonet. *(Charlie watches him evenly, smiling a little. Owen is smiling too.)* Hey, dummy? *(To David.)* He really don't know what I'm sayin', huh?

DAVID. No.

OWEN. No, reckon not. 'Cause if he did, I'd know it. I would. I'm smart about some things. Like when people's playactin' on me? *(Circling behind Charlie's chair.)* I always can catch 'em. I catch 'em ever' time. An' then, ye know what I do? I pour hot Coke down their necks, like this—. *(Charlie, now looking toward David, remains blandly beatific. Owen, of course, does not pour Coke down Charlie's neck.)* Well. This is sorta fun. Say anything you want to him, long 's you're smilin', cain't ye? *(In front of Charlie again.)* Hey, Charlie? Whar's your mother? Huh? Where's she at now? Down under ground, someplace? Some foreign graveyard the hell off someplace, pushin' up—palm trees, 'er sump'm? Wonder what she looks like now. You ever wonder that? What she looks like right now? They's probably not enough of 'er left to spread on toast. *(A wide smile.)* Whaddaya say to that? Huh? Ain't you got nothin' to say to that? Huh?

CHARLIE. *(With great calm.)* Thank you.

OWEN. *(Laughing.)* Yee-hee! Y' hear that? "Thank you!" Don't that jest beat it? "Thank you," he says!

DAVID. That's all he knows.

OWEN. Well, that's real good, Charlie. You're gonna be some fun to have around. Yes sir. I am gonna have some fun with you.